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General Assembly
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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Identical letters dated 7 October 2016 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I regret to have to draw your attention once again to the critical and tense situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as a result of Israel's relentless provocations and illegal actions against the Palestinian people. The systematic human rights violations and breaches of humanitarian law, particularly the theft and colonization of the Palestinian land being perpetrated by the occupying Power, continue to undermine the fragile and perilous situation on the ground and threaten to make the two-State solution impossible.

In flagrant defiance of international law and the demands of the international community to cease its illegitimate and destructive campaign of settlement-building throughout the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, Israel, the occupying Power, continues to provoke and incite with repeated declarations regarding further plans to colonize the Palestinian land. Just the past week, the occupying Power announced its intention to advance plans to construct an entirely new illegal Israeli settlement in the northern occupied West Bank, likely to be used to relocate illegal settlers residing in the so-called settlement outpost of "Amona".

In fact, according to Israeli human rights organization Peace Now, two plans were promoted by the so-called Higher Planning Committee of the Israeli Civil Administration on 28 September 2016, including the new settlement for the "Amona" settlers, as well as for a new industrial zone west of Ramallah in the central occupied West Bank. In this regard, the Higher Planning Committee approved the "depositing" — the planning phase prior to final approval — of a plan for 98 illegal settlement units in a new settlement to be located east of the already established settlement of "Shiloh", on the land of the Palestinian village of Jalud in the northern West Bank district of Nablus. It has been reported that this is part of a larger Israeli plan to build 300 more settlement units that have yet to be announced.

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In this regard, it is relevant to point out that in April 2016, Palestinian residents of Jalud reported that Israeli occupying authorities delivered notices alerting them that 5,000 dunams (1,250 acres) of private land were slated for confiscation. This latest illegal Israeli plan not only risks further separating Ramallah from Nablus in the occupied West Bank but also further undermines the contiguity of a future Palestinian State.

The other approval by the so-called Higher Planning Committee was for a new industrial area west of Ramallah, near Israel's annexation wall and the Green Line that divides the occupied West Bank from Israel. According to Peace Now, "the new industrial zone can be considered as another kind of settlement as the Israeli government will be encouraging investors to build their factories in this area, which is potentially highly attractive for industries because of its close proximity to both Tel Aviv and Jerusalem."

Having said the above, the time is overdue for the international community to put an immediate end to Israel's colonial enterprise in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Actions must be taken to uphold the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, as well as the 9 July 2004 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice to bring the occupying Power into compliance with its legal obligations. In particular, while recalling the many Council resolutions directly addressing this crime, including resolutions 446 (1979), 452 (1979), 465 (1980) and 478 (1980), we call on the Council to act in unison in calling on the occupying Power to halt its settlement enterprise since it is clearly acknowledged that settlements pose the biggest challenge to a peaceful settlement based on the two-State solution.

Moreover, it is not only Israel's illegal settlement enterprise that continues to violate international law and the human rights of the Palestinian people. The occupying Power also persists with all of its other policies and measures against the defenceless Palestinian population, including, among many other things, the killing and injuring of innocent Palestinian civilians, among them women and children. In this regard, since October 2015, Israeli occupying forces have killed over 225 Palestinian civilians and have injured more than 15,000 Palestinians. The latest victim of the occupation was a 28-year-old Palestinian, Naseem Abu Mazer, who was shot and killed by Israeli occupying forces at Israel's military checkpoint of Qalandia on 30 September 2016. This killing comes on the heels of the shooting of a 13-year-old Palestinian girl, Baraa Owaisi, on 28 September 2016 by Israeli occupying forces at a roadblock near the illegal Israeli settlement of "Alfei Menashe", near Qalqilia in the northern part of the West Bank. Tragically, Baraa is the niece of a 23-year old Palestinian woman, Rasha Owaisi, who was also killed by Israeli occupying forces in November 2015 at a military roadblock in the same area.

Moreover, the occupying Power continues to employ measures of collective punishment against the entire Palestinian population living under its ruthless military occupation. In the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, measures of collective punishment, such as home demolitions, curfews, checkpoints and closures, not only continue but are also on the rise. And, in the Gaza Strip, collective punishment such as the illegal and immoral blockade, now in its tenth year, continues to affect the almost 2 million civilians who are suffering from a dire

socioeconomic and humanitarian crisis deliberately caused by the occupying Power. In addition, this past week, Israel, the occupying Power, continued with its aggression against the Gaza Strip. This included the Israeli bombing of an agricultural area to the east of Beit Hanoun, north of the Gaza Strip as well as the unleashing of machine-gun fire from Israeli navy boats directed at Palestinian fishermen sailing in Gaza's waters. We also condemn Israel's aggression against the international flotilla that attempted to break the illegal Israeli siege of Gaza on 6 October 2016. We call upon the occupying Power to immediately release the all-female crew composed of parliamentarians, writers and human rights activists, among others and allow them to return to their respective countries.

The Palestinian leadership strongly condemns all of Israel's illegal, inhumane and destructive actions and calls on the international community, including the Security Council, to demand an end to all illegal Israeli policies and practices in the Occupied State of Palestine, including in East Jerusalem. Israel must be held fully accountable in accordance with international law and the principles of justice for all of its violations and for its continuing obstruction of peace. Salvaging the prospects for peace and stability and, equally, salvaging the credibility of international law and the international system itself require urgent collective action to bring about an end to this unjust and unlawful situation. It can no longer suffice to condemn or simply be appalled by Israel's illegal actions, including settlement-building, for only real international action can bring an end to Israel's occupation that began nearly a half-century ago in 1967. The Council must immediately act to uphold its duties under the Charter of the United Nations and implement its own resolutions in order to alleviate this crisis and bring about an end to Israel's aggression and crimes, thus tangibly contributing to the decades-long search for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict before the solution slips out of reach.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 596 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 20 September 2016 (A/ES-10/733-S/2016/801), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations